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ABSTRACT

Questions and answers are presented concerning the consequences for higher education of the passage of the RAISE Bill (Senate Bill 357), a comprehensive education bill designed to raise educational standards in Florida. This statement by Miami-Dade Community College (MDCC) covers: (1) the bill and its provisions for higher education; (2) ways in which access to higher education would be reduced; (3) the financial impact on students and local taxpayers of the elimination of developmental education courses from the community college curriculum; (4) how the reduction of minority enrollments would jeopardize federal support; (5) whether restricting admission to higher education is the only way to ensure quality; (6) how the academic program at MDCC ensures both access and quality; (7) the role played by MDCC in providing access to minorities in Florida; (8) recommendations of educational professionals and national authorities concerning developmental education; (9) why offering developmental education in the community colleges as part of their full educational program is more appropriate than sending students back to high school for adult basic education; (10) how developmental education in college differs from adult basic education; and (11) how adult students would feel about being "sent back to high school." The MDCC statement looks at the likely consequences of the RAISE Bill on higher education and recommends that community colleges continue to provide developmental services. (HB)

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CONCERNING THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISIONS OF THE RAISE BILL (SENATE BILL 357)

Miami-Dade Community College
11011 S. W. 104 Street
Miami, Florida 33176

MARCH 1983

JC 830 229

The RAISE Bill Being Considered by the Florida Senate Threatens Economic Opportunity for Thousands of Floridians By Denying Access to Higher Education

The "RAISE Bill" has been proposed in the Florida Senate to raise expectations at all levels of Florida education. The objectives and many of the provisions of the bill are worthy of support. However, the sections concerning higher education are exactly the wrong approach, and would be seriously damaging to the people and the economy of Florida.

The bill provides that standardized tests be used as the sole indicator of readiness for higher education, and would eliminate from community colleges the developmental support services presently required by the majority of the entering students at Miami-Dade Community College. This approach is to improve higher education by eliminating thousands of students, rather than by improving the educational services so that more attain higher achievement.

To match the emerging jobs in the information age, increasing numbers of our citizens will require postsecondary education. Denying access would permanently handicap individuals and threaten our industry and business which need a knowledgeable work force. Our state needs more, rather than fewer, well-educated persons.

Some of the consequences of the higher education provisions of the RAISE Bill are shown on the reverse side of this statement.

1. IT WOULD MAKE THE MAJORITY OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES CURRENTLY BEGINNING HIGHER EDUCATION AT MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE INELIGIBLE FOR ADMISSION.

2. IT WOULD MAKE NEARLY 90% OF THE BLACK STUDENT INELIGIBLE FOR ADMISSION TO MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

3. IT WOULD MAKE NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF THE HISPANIC STUDENTS INELIGIBLE FOR ADMISSION TO MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

4. IT WOULD MAKE THE MAJORITY OF THE STUDENTS INELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID. CURRENTLY, BLACK STUDENTS AT MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE RECEIVE $3,500,000 IN FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID, AND HISPANICS RECEIVE $7,000,000 IN FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID.

5. IT WOULD TRANSFER THE COST OF DEVELOPMENTAL (REPLACED BY REMEDIAL) PROGRAMS FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO THE DADE COUNTY PROPERTY TAXPAYER.

6. IT WOULD TRANSFER PART OF THE SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENTAL (REPLACED BY REMEDIAL) PROGRAMS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA TO THE DADE COUNTY PROPERTY TAXPAYER.

7. IT WOULD PLACE ALL FLORIDA PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN SERIOUS JEOPARDY OF LOSING ALL FEDERAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

8. IT WOULD MAKE FLORIDA INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS LESS COMPETITIVE BY BLOCKING THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALS PREPARED FOR INFORMATION-AGE JOBS.

9. IT WOULD PREVENT COMMUNITY COLLEGES FROM UTILIZING ALL EDUCATIONAL CAPABILITIES TO ASSIST STUDENTS TO SUCCEED.

RECOMMENDATION

EDUCATIONAL POLICY SHOULD BE TO DEVELOP ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF FLORIDA WITH THE SKILLS APPROPRIATE FOR THE INFORMATION AGE. DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT SERVICES IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES SHOULD BE PROVIDED SO LONG AS THERE ARE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES, BOTH ADULTS AND RECENT GRADUATES, WHO REQUIRE SUCH ASSISTANCE AS THEY BEGIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEGREE PROGRAMS.

3/15/83

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
CONCERNING THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISIONS
OF THE RAISE BILL (SENATE BILL 357)

Miami-Dade Community College
11011 S. W. 104 Street
Miami, Florida 33176

March 1983

A. WHAT IS THE RAISE BILL, AND WHAT ARE THE PROVISIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION?

The RAISE Bill sponsored by Senator Curtis Peterson, President of the Florida Senate, is a comprehensive education bill with primary focus on secondary education. It results from recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Secondary Schools. The major goal of the 75-page bill is to raise educational standards, and it mandates major changes, many supportable, at all levels of our educational system. The bill would have a far-reaching impact on Florida. Unfortunately, those sections dealing with higher education appear to be based on two misconceptions. One, that all college students are full-time, eighteen-year-olds, who come directly from high school; and two, that practices which restrict enrollment are the only way to improve quality and are therefore desirable for the state. These sections of the bill would have particularly negative impact on the people of Dade County, especially minorities. The following highlights several of the more important problems:

1. Limited Access
   a. Effective August 1987, standards for admission to baccalaureate programs, whether beginning in community colleges or universities, would require two years of a foreign language in high school, 24 high school academic credits, and a long list of prescribed courses. This would effectively exclude from admission most adults and those who attended high school out of the state.

   b. There would be a state-wide standardized test required of high school graduates, in order to enter higher education. Those with scores which indicate any academic deficiencies would be required to enroll in adult education courses, taught by adult education instructors, rather than proceed into community colleges and being provided developmental services as required.

   c. Older students would no longer be able to use a high school diploma gained through the nationally recognized GED program as the basis for admission eligibility to colleges and universities.

2. Limited Services To Students
   Effective July 1, 1985, community colleges would be blocked from providing students with necessary developmental education services through the elimination of funding for those services.

3. Restriction Of Federal Financial Aid To Students
   By July 1, 1985, community colleges would no longer offer developmental education services; rather, they would be replaced by courses clearly labeled as "high school." All such courses are ineligible for federal student financial aid.

B. HOW WOULD THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISIONS OF THE RAISE BILL SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION?

Provisions of the RAISE Bill would institute a test as the basis for admission to community colleges. Any student demonstrating deficiencies in computation, reading, or writing, regardless of age, would be "sent back to the high schools" and denied admission to higher education.

At Miami-Dade Community College more than half of the entering students test as deficient in one or more basic skills areas. Because of the centuries-long history of deprivation, disadvantaged life circumstances, and/or language difficulties, substantial percentages of both black and Hispanic students begin college with some academic deficiencies. Seventy percent of Hispanic and 90% of black students at Miami-Dade test as needing developmental assistance in reading, writing, or computation. To require that these students return to the high school for adult basic education clearly does not meet their needs and, on the basis of a single test score, would preclude the College from designing the best program to help these students to succeed. When added to other requirements now being instituted in Florida, the result would be a dramatic decrease in numbers of minorities entering the professional and technical ranks, and having access to the most desirable types of employment.

C. WHAT WOULD BE THE FINANCIAL IMPACT ON STUDENTS IF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION COURSES ARE ELIMINATED AND HIGH SCHOOL ADULT BASIC EDUCATION COURSES SUBSTITUTED?

Students who have limited financial resources receive federal financial aid for attending programs at Miami-Dade Community College; however, students enrolled in high school programs are not eligible for such aid. These federal programs are firmly entrenched, and the Reagan Administration has proposed that they be expanded. Miami-Dade has the largest federal student aid grant program in the nation: one of every 200 Basic Educational Opportunity (PELL) Grants awarded nationwide go to Miami-Dade students. Further, most financial aid recipients are minorities, a large percentage of whom require developmental support. Federal financial aid guidelines specifically provide for college level developmental programs.

To illustrate the magnitude of the federal financial commitment, last year at Miami-Dade black students received almost $3,500,000 in college work study and other federal grants, and Hispanic students received $7,000,000 in college work study and other federal grants. If students with academic deficiencies were restricted to high school adult basic education programs, the large influx of federal money into this area would be cut off. Students here would be unable to take advantage of opportunities provided by the federal government and available to residents of other states. With the loss of federal financial assistance as a result of the suggested program change, needy students would be denied the opportunity to continue their education. In addition to a significant loss of funds to poor families in the county, there would also be a great loss in human potential.

D. WHAT WOULD BE THE FINANCIAL IMPACT ON THE DADE COUNTY PROPERTY TAXPAYERS IF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION COURSES ARE ELIMINATED AND HIGH SCHOOL ADULT BASIC EDUCATION COURSES SUBSTITUTED?

The expense of teaching a developmental student at a community college is borne 71% by the state and 25% by the student.* In most cases, the 25% borne by the student is provided by the federal government through various financial aid programs. The expense of teaching an adult elementary and secondary student in the public schools is borne only 55% by the state and 34% by local property taxes.** Official state records show that expenditures per student for community college developmental education are effectively the same as for adult basic education in the public schools. Thus the overall effect of the proposed RAISE Bill is to transfer a significant amount of the state's expenditure for these services, and all of the student/federal contribution, to Dade County property taxpayers.

E. HOW WOULD THE REDUCTION OF MINORITY ENROLLMENT JEOPARDIZE ALL FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR FLORIDA'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES?

The Adams Case (1970) in essence involved a successful suit based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The plaintiffs were thirty-one students (suing through their parents) and two other United States citizens and taxpayers. The charge was that the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare was continuing to provide financial assistance to a large number of public school systems and public colleges which still practiced segregation and discrimination.

As a result of this case, the state of Florida was ordered to develop and implement programs to bring equity in higher education for black residents. Goal 4 of the revised Equal Access/Equal Opportunity Plan for community colleges states: "Increase black student enrollment of high school graduates to the level necessary to achieve parity with white student enrollment of high school graduates; insure a system-wide enrollment level of non-black minority and women students who can benefit from postsecondary education to a system-wide enrollment proportion at least equal to their proportion in Florida's population, and increase the system enrollment of handicapped students."

A further major provision of the community college plan calls for an increase in number and percentage of black students. However, for fall 1982, as compared with fall 1981, the community colleges experienced a loss of 1,208 black students. The percentage of black students to total students decreased from 10.4% in 1981 to 9.5% in 1982. This is one reason that Florida is already under censure for failure to provide equal access to higher education.

Prior to the opening of Miami-Dade Community College in 1960, there were no opportunities for black U. S. citizens residing in Southeast Florida to have access to higher education. For this access to be drastically curtailed in less than a quarter century would not only be a travesty of justice and human decency, but would also perpetuate poverty for many generations and create an underclass of people dependent upon government support. Further, it would virtually assure federal proceedings against Florida that could well lead to withdrawal of all federal funds for Florida public higher education.

* The Report for Florida Community Colleges, 1980-81 edition.
**Profiles of Florida School Districts, Vol. II, 1980-81.

F. IS RESTRICTING ADMISSION TO HIGHER EDUCATION THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE QUALITY?

Many persons who are successful in college and in their professions began their college careers with some academic deficiencies. The president of one of the largest businesses in Dade County recently recounted that in his first term in college he took "bonehead" English--the forerunner of developmental English; and a prominent Florida legislator and the president of the largest college in Florida had similar experiences. The fact is that these are not unusual cases. On the first Florida College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) for rising juniors, the top half of Miami-Dade graduates out-performed the selective-admission state university students, and 17% of those high-performing students began with developmental classes.

Unfortunately, some individuals now advocate utilizing tests for admission of high school graduates to community colleges. The rationale is that by restricting access, a more academically-talented group of students would be left, and thus quality would be increased. This is probably true, but what would happen to those who are excluded, and to their potential contribution to society? While restricting opportunity is contrary to the American commitment to equal access and opportunity for all citizens, it may have been acceptable on the basis of economics years ago, when most jobs were classified as unskilled or semi-skilled. Today that approach is unacceptable even from a purely economic standpoint, as a predominance of jobs now require strong information skills. In order to flourish, Florida business and industry must have a broad-based, well-educated work force.

The following is an excellent illustration of the impact and relative merit of restricted admission and open admissions. Most Associate Degree Registered Nurse (AD-RN) programs in the country are selective-admission programs. Test scores and/or high school performance are used as the basis for admission in all of the Associate Degree Registered Nurse programs in Florida, except Miami-Dade Community College. If individuals at Miami-Dade wish to enter the AD-RN program, they may choose to set that goal and, if they are deficient or need strengthening in any area, they can begin that work and progress to the AD-RN program upon demonstration of readiness by course performance. The differing results of the two policies is striking. While far too few black students (only 25) completed AD-RN programs in Florida, 22 of these 25 were at Miami-Dade Community College. Further, there were only 40 Hispanic students completing those programs, and 38 were at Miami-Dade Community College. Many of those who were successful at Miami-Dade would not have had high enough test scores initially for admission to other AD-RN programs.

Data concerning the Registered Nurse (RN) transition programs provide further evidence that individuals who might not initially qualify by test scores into AD-RN programs can be successful with appropriate support. The community colleges have designed programs for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) to become Registered Nurses, although most of the LPNs would not have met the initial test requirements for admission to RN programs. Through these programs, 25 Hispanics completed the AD-RN program successfully--13 at Miami-Dade, and 12 in the other colleges; and 115 blacks completed the program--25 at Miami-Dade, and 90 at the other colleges. The conclusions that can be drawn from this information are of great importance: first, it would be reasonable to

extrapolate from these data to all programs, thus showing the impact on minority students if tests are used as the criterion for program admission; second, the data show that programs can be designed to help some who begin with academic deficiencies to be successful; and, finally, results indicate the benefit to the state when the open admission policy is combined with careful programming in the personal development of individuals. These successful minority individuals will now be employed, well paid, and contributing members of society, while providing badly-needed skilled nursing services to the hospital industry. This illustration makes clear that the best policy for Florida is to fully develop our human resources through the provision of opportunity and supportive assistance when required.

G. HOW DOES THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM AT MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENSURE BOTH ACCESS AND QUALITY?

Miami-Dade Community College is deeply committed to serving all the people of the community, while maintaining the highest standards to guarantee the quality educational program which residents, businesses and industries must have. During the past eight years, the College has systematically ordered the curriculum so that it is more directive, supportive and demanding. Students with academic deficiencies must show that they have acquired the necessary skills before moving from introductory to more advanced levels. Further, the College monitors the progress of all students term by term, and suspends those who do not make satisfactory progress. Because of this comprehensive approach, many national educational leaders consider Miami-Dade's program to be the most promising attempt anywhere in the country to deal with the sometimes conflicting concerns for equal access and high quality.

One means of promoting quality learning is an extensive testing program. All students are tested when they are admitted to the College to determine whether they have any weaknesses in the basic academic skills. These tests are not "entrance" tests to gain admission, but rather are "placement" tests to make sure that students correct any basic skills deficiencies and begin their educational program with appropriate courses. Students in the regular program must also demonstrate that they have acquired more advanced communications and mathematical skills as part of their general education requirements. Before they can receive an Associate in Arts Degree and transfer to the upper division of a state university, students must once again demonstrate advanced English and mathematics skills on Florida's state tests. The most significant factor is the success of Miami-Dade graduates -- following transfer to the university system, they receive grades equal to or higher than those received while at Miami-Dade.

Another approach Miami-Dade has taken to give all community members an opportunity to receive a college education while at the same time demanding high performance is its extensive academic standards program, which has become a model for many community colleges around the country. Those students who are not achieving satisfactorily, even in their first term at the College, are required to take special courses and to receive special assistance to help them become successful. Furthermore, the College restricts their course load, since some students make an unrealistic attempt to carry a full academic load while working full-time, raising a family, commuting to college, and carrying on an active social life. While the College encourages everyone to advance his or her education, it also is convinced that some students will require more time and more individualized help if they are to be successful.

The importance of providing the opportunity for a college education to all members of the community, even those who have some academic deficiencies or who have not been successful in prior schooling, may not be understood by all the public. While Miami-Dade Community College is truly committed to excellence (as indicated by a new comprehensive honors program, "Emphasis on Excellence"), the simplest way to achieve high quality, by restricting admission to only those who already are successful students, would be a detriment to the community and would deprive many individuals of the opportunity for intellectual and economic advancement. Quality has always been characteristic of the American tradition; an even more significant characteristic, however, has been equality of opportunity.

H. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS FOR MINORITIES IN FLORIDA?

Miami-Dade Community College is the most essential institution in minority access to higher education in Florida. It is significantly different from any other institution in the state, and properly reflects its commitment to serve all the people of the Dade County community. The College has more minority students than the other twenty-seven community colleges or the university system.

In the fall of 1982, results from the first College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) were received. Of those students taking the CLAST examination for admission to the junior year in Florida universities, or for the receipt of an Associate in Arts Degree (the transfer degree), 68% of all Hispanics were Miami-Dade Community College students, and more black students took the examination at Miami-Dade than at Florida A & M.

Many black students have grown up under disadvantaged conditions and have had previous educational experiences which seriously handicap them in academic skills. In addition many Hispanic students, including large numbers who are new to this country, have hurdles to overcome in the area of language. This does not suggest the lack of quality or promise of these individuals--rather it reflects their life experiences. If Miami-Dade were restricted from providing developmental services to minority students needing such assistance, the impact on the access of minorities to higher education in Florida would be devastating.

I. WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS AND NATIONAL AUTHORITIES CONCERNING DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION?

National authorities agree that there is a crisis in America that is rooted in a combination of declining academic skills and burgeoning needs of business and industry for individuals possessing these same skills. Most Americans will need sound information skills (finding, reading, interpreting, analyzing and communicating text and numeric information) as a requirement for employment. Thus closing the information skill gap is of central importance to this nation. Failure would increase the already dangerously large underclass of structurally unemployed, with devastating attendant societal impact, and would handicap American business and industry with a seriously underprepared work force.

The task of closing the education gap will require a significant long term effort, including the commitment of adequate resources. It can be divided into three categories: changing secondary education so that future graduates have stronger academic preparation; assisting those graduating from high school with academic deficiencies during the transition; and assisting adults to reeducate for information age jobs.

The problem of raising performance in secondary schools is very complex and staggering in dimension. Problems in education and in performance expectations at all levels--from kindergarten through graduate school--are systemic and rooted in the values and attitudes of our society. The issue is significantly magnified by the rising level of information skills necessary to participate fully in the society. Put quite simply, the level of information skills that was adequate for earlier generations is insufficient for those currently attending our schools. Not only is it necessary that high school graduates have greater information skills, but that more individuals complete and graduate from high school. Further, three out of four high school graduates will need some postsecondary education during their lifetime. Twenty-five years ago, half of the jobs in America were in unskilled or semi-skilled categories. This has already declined to twenty percent. More than half of the jobs are now in offices, and three-quarters involve handling data--and the information age is just beginning.

The task of high schools to graduate an increasing percentage of young people with far stronger information skills is overwhelming. No one familiar with this challenge believes that change can be achieved rapidly, and certainly not through efforts of the schools alone. Without doubt, there will be a significant period of transition during which many high school graduates will require additional assistance as they begin college programs.

The final issue involves millions of American adults who are already in the work force, but who lack the skills required for emerging occupations. It will continue to be in the best interest of society to reeducate these individuals. That task is substantial, and obviously grounded in developmental education services.

Those who have studied the issues recognize the systemic nature of the problems involved in the education gap: the need to fully develop our human resources, and the need to raise educational achievement at all levels. Recognizing the difficulty in achieving this, the Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission recommends as a goal that by 1990 high schools should ensure that their graduates are fully prepared for postsecondary programs, and that community colleges should no longer need to offer developmental courses to students entering directly from high school. The Commission also recognized that community colleges should continue over the long term to provide developmental education services to adults.

In the most recent major national study (1982, p.8), the National Commission on Higher Education Issues concluded, "Colleges and universities share with the primary and secondary levels responsibilities for helping to develop the competence of those who do not meet the requirements for full participation in programs leading to the baccalaureate and who wish to acquire such competence. Such students should have access to remedial work and other appropriate assistance."

J. WHY IS IT MORE APPROPRIATE TO PROVIDE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION SERVICES TO COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS AS PART OF A FULL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, AS OPPOSED TO SENDING THEM BACK TO THE HIGH SCHOOL FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION?

Most students who enter the community college with academic deficiencies do not require developmental coursework in all three areas of reading, writing and computation. To illustrate, in the fall of 1982, Miami-Dade tested nearly 7,000 students. Of those, 34.5% were above cut-off scores in all areas; 20% were below in one of the three areas; 23.8% in two areas; and 21.7% in all three. In addition to this single indicator, the community college recognizes each student as an individual with other strengths or weaknesses, talents, outside work requirements, etc., and utilizes all of its educational expertise in the design of individualized programs which will promote success.

Miami-Dade provides assistance and directs individuals toward a higher level of achievement by restricting loads for students not doing well, requiring support services and supplemental courses where they are necessary, and sequencing courses so that developmental deficiencies are overcome at the appropriate place as students progress. Since developmental courses are not limited to reading, writing, and math, many other services are available to help students succeed which may be taken concurrent with regular coursework. A writing lab, for example, might supplement other English course enrollment, or be required at the time that such deficiencies are noted by faculty in other areas. Research shows that students are more likely to succeed in developmental work when concurrently allowed to take some regular college level courses for which they are prepared. It is widely recognized that a key factor for success in developmental education is the motivation a student derives from working in a college atmosphere, interacting and competing with students from different socio-economic backgrounds, and experiencing gradual success through a continuous and integrated program.

Further, the teaching of developmental courses in the community college permits the use of departmental faculty and the establishment of a longer-term relationship with the students in a particular area. Thus the math faculty, who will teach the later courses, can also teach developmental courses and can integrate a student's program, monitor and provide assistance, and know when appropriate progress has been made. College teachers are most knowledgable about the demands of college work and are therefore best qualified to prepare students for this educational experience.

K. WHAT IS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION? HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM ADULT BASIC EDUCATION?

The objectives of community college developmental education are more comprehensive and at a higher performance level than those of adult basic education. While adult basic education emphasizes skills and knowledge that are considered basic and general education at the elementary and high school level, community college developmental education addresses not only any deficiencies in these areas, but also the background knowledge that is necessary for success in various technical programs or professional majors.

Among the goals of adult basic education are the basic competencies necessary for adult students to: (a) engage in further academic education leading to a high school equivalency diploma, and (b) improve their daily lives as competent adults and responsible parents.

On the other hand, community college developmental education goes far beyond mere functional skills. Although some adult students--including those recently graduated from high school and those who have been out of school for many years--may need to develop these basic skills, they must be raised to higher levels than adult basic education requirements in order to be successful in college level work. In addition, developmental education includes much more than remedial reading, writing, and mathematics. The academic skills of many of today's workers are inadequate for the new jobs that are emerging. This was described well in a recent publication, "As the American economy becomes even more complex, there will be a corresponding increase in the minimal skill requirements for workers. Therefore, those with educational deficiencies and minimal skills increasingly will be unable to participate in the work force until their basic literacy and functional abilities are improved." Developmental education is not concerned only with students' ability to read or write at some arbitrary level. Rather, it concerns the ability of adults to apply skills that are essential to meeting new job requirements or to advancement in new careers. "Potential workers now must be able to read at advanced levels, think critically, solve problems, synthesize, and communicate effectively with co-workers, verbally and in writing." (Choate, 1982, p. 29).

Community college developmental programs ideally are integrated courses that provide instruction beyond the minimum high school basic skills competencies to include all of that learning that is needed to enter into a specific college academic program. In addition to mathematics and communications courses, these courses can include introduction to the sciences, introduction to data processing and systems management, library research, secretarial skills, elementary foreign language instruction, and the psychology of career adjustment. A very specialized, but most important, aspect of developmental programs are courses for physically handicapped students. Developmental programs include more than just courses; they can also include individualized tutoring and assistance that enables students in more advanced courses to receive the help needed to be successful.

In short, community college developmental programs include instruction and skill development in whatever areas students require to succeed in their transfer or technical programs. These services provide assistance for individuals who do not have skills needed for employment, as well as for present workers who must advance their skills in order to remain employed as the nature of work in America changes.

L. THE AVERAGE AGE OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT IS TWENTY-EIGHT--HOW WOULD THESE ADULT STUDENTS FEEL ABOUT BEING "SENT BACK TO HIGH SCHOOL"?

The higher education sections of the RAISE Bill appear to be based on the false premise that all students entering community colleges are full-time eighteen-year-olds coming directly from high school and, therefore, the high schools should be "punished" for failing to do better by sending these students back to them. In fact, less than half of community college students come directly from high school and, in Dade County, twenty percent of those come from private high schools. In addition, the median age in urban community colleges such as Miami-Dade is 28, and this population may have attended high school anywhere in the country, or even out of the country. It is hardly appropriate to decide that all of the problems related to educational level

and preparation of our citizenry are the result of recent services provided by our local public high schools. Even if this were the case, sending adults back to high school would not punish the high schools, but rather the individuals.

As discussed earlier, research confirms the preference of adults to pursue academic work in community colleges rather than high schools, and it is clear that increased retention occurs when these individuals begin at the community college level. Motivation is one of the most important ingredients in success; for many students this presents a significant hurdle, and adults are more comfortable with other adults in a community college setting. To demand that a 30-year-old student return to high school before being allowed to enter a community college is both impractical and insensitive. Even if students could be prepared in one year to pass the proposed entrance test, they would continue to need more than typical instructional support when taking college level courses. This additional dimension of developmental education would be precluded by the proposed legislation.

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